

# The News Scimitar

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Roosevelt's Denial of Control of League.

We relate to see that Franklin Roosevelt, Democratic candidate for vice-president, has denied a statement attributed to him in the course of a speech in Butte, Mont., in which he was quoted as saying that if the United States went into the league of nations it would control the league by reason of having some twelve or fourteen votes to six held by Great Britain. The statement of denial was given to the Associated Press at Kittery, Me., some three weeks after the report of the speech in Montana.

The public has been startled by quotations from the Montana speech by newspapers that were content to accept what was apparently a misstatement of facts on its face, but seized upon as conclusive proof that the United States would dominate the league.

For our part we prefer to withhold comment upon a statement so obviously ridiculous attributed to a candidate for the important office of vice-president of the United States.

The press dispatches carrying Mr. Roosevelt's Montana speech indicated that he had a pocketful of votes in the league of nations. Three or four votes were in his possession at that time, according to the report of the speech. Secretary Daniels had a batch and Mr. Roosevelt had left another block in an old suit of clothes, or somewhere. The report of the speech indicated that he had as many votes in the league in his pocket as a Chicago salesman has in his sleeve. They passed it on with interest, and in so doing gave us a foretaste of events to come.

The price of coal in Boston has been raised from \$14.50 to \$16 a ton. There might have been other factors than the increase in railroad rates, but they are not known if they exist.

The freight on a ton of coal from the producing areas to Boston went up about \$2.50, and the cost of that comes to \$12.50, which is the additional cost the dealers had reason to charge because of the recent decline of the interstate commerce commission. The dealers did not stop with charging the 40 percent they had to pay, they doubled it and made 80 percent, doubtless in the interest of round numbers.

The cost of coal depends on the cost of transportation to a degree not equaled by any other commodity in such universal use. It was to be expected that the rate would be affected by the rate raise if anything on the market was. It was also to be expected that it would be affected to an extent not justified by the actual increase in transportation cost, and that too in the case. Business is business with the profiteer.

But the public will be well pleased if the goods it wants come to the market with a final profiteer's tax no greater in proportion than the 30 cents on a ton of coal. The profiteers in this case have shown considerable modesty and restraint, and deserve bouquets better than bricks.

Another Foretaste.

A new prophet has arisen in the person of Dr. Julius H. Parmelee, statistician of the bureau of railroad commerce. He has a theory about the statistics that are going to prevail as a result of the recent raise in freight rates.

Two or three per cent is the amount of additional cost the public should have to pay on its commodities by reason of the new rates. Any amount in excess of this is profiteering, says Dr. Parmelee, whose arguments sound convincing.

There has been too much talk about the "movement" of prices, which means that the finished commodity presented by the retailer has made four or five railroad journeys already, and paid the increased rate the same number of times in the course of the assembly of its parts, the passing on from one stage of manufacture to another, and the final distribution. It is true of some articles that four or five increased freight charges have been imposed upon them, but it is not true of all.

Nothing definite can be said of that kind of figuring.

Parmelee figures are much simpler. Statisticians have shown that the average fraction of the cost of products that is paid for freight charges is six to eight per cent of its total cost. The new rates add an increase of 35 per cent on the freight charges. This is 35 percent of the original six or eight per cent comes to two or three per cent. This is mathematically the fair increase the public should pay for its goods.

This is good theory, our only fear is that the profiteers will not know what a good theory it is. What will happen in practice will be that each one of them will claim that the freight fraction of cost of his commodity was increased more than six or eight per cent, and much nearer fifty per cent. The public will not know enough to answer that claim, and we suspect that the department of justice will not make a successful answer either.

Chess must be a human sort of game after all. They are going to hold the world's championship tournament in Havana.

The Nashville Jitneys operating in lieu of street cars charged the native time. When is a jitney not a jitney?

Imagine the holy pride of the moviegoer that stung Babe Ruth and put him out of the game for 10 days.

There is no unanimity in the United States at present, precipitation by the United States would not make a unanimous verdict.

The people of the United States will not accept the individual interpretation of the league by candidates who are for it or against it. The covenant is short and simple and can be readily understood by anyone of average intelligence.

MacSwiney's Fight.

Terence MacSwiney, lord mayor of Cork, because of his allegiance to the Irish republic, is starting himself to death in British prison. He declared when arrested that he would not eat until he was free.

MacSwiney is a young man of splendid talent. He has a charming wife, and a beautiful child. All the world sympathizes with him in his devotion to the cause of Ireland. At the same time the British value the most benevolent of any country.

Lord George has declared that to release him because he has gone on a hunger strike would be to place this form of unoffending resistance above the law. King George is helpless in the situation. He could issue a pardon, but to do so would precipitate a cabinet crisis and cause all his ministers to resign.

A hunger strike impresses the people of this country too much like the tactics of militant suffragettes. It is a universal sympathy strike. Virtue and aggression resistance in the sort of contest a spirited people like to witness.

We sympathize with MacSwiney and his aspirations, with his wife, his child and his friends. We can not see that he is furthering his cause by his placid determination to refuse food so long as he is confined in prison.

If the method adopted by MacSwiney is a good one, it should be followed by all who share his allegiance to the Irish cause. If it is a bad one, he ought not to set an example. If all could not so prefer to profess allegiance to the republic should go on a hunger strike until the republic is recognized, the question of home rule would be settled within 40 days, provided the British government should continue its unyielding attitude. We are sorry for MacSwiney.

We do wish he would take a little nourishment.

A Foretaste.

With admirable promptitude such as the initiated had every reason to expect, the coal dealers in the East have passed on the recent raise in the price of coal transportation. They passed it on with interest, and in so doing gave us a foretaste of events to come.

The price of coal in Boston has been raised from \$14.50 to \$16 a ton. There might have been other factors than the increase in railroad rates, but they are not known if they exist.

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## A FREE MAP OF THE NEW EUROPE

Mr. Cox and Mr. Harding are both having a great deal to say about Europe.

The newspapers constantly discuss this subject.

Get this free map so you can check up the map.

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q—A sugar maple in front of my house seems to be dying. It has been struck by lightning or hurt in any way. What can you suggest?—D. R. R.

A—It may be that the tree is too near the surface and is being damaged by traffic. Loosening the earth and adding enough drainage cover roots thoroughly might help. Otherwise, you should consult a tree surgeon.

Q—A bet that there are more hands that will beat four aces than there are that will beat four aces. Does he win?

A—A loss. There are 32 hands that will beat four aces and only 24 that will beat four tens. Only straight-flushes will beat four aces and there are 32 in which aces do not figure (the aces being held against the possible combinations). There are only 20 straight flushes that can be made without the use of the tens. Add to this the number of four aces that will beat the four tens, and the result is that you have only 24 hands that will beat four tens.

Q—What does the name "kangaroo" mean?—N. E. F.

A—When Captain Cook discovered Australia, he saw some natives on shore with a dead animal in their possession. He sent a message to the natives to bring it back to find out the name of the animal. The natives could not understand the meaning of the word, so they brought back a kangaroo.

Q—What part of a cork remains above water?—P. S. M.

A—A cork is an buoyant that 76 per cent is above water.

Q—Are negroes allowed to ride in the same cars and trains with whites in the District of Columbia?—W. M. A.

A—There is no discrimination made on the public conveyances in the District of Columbia between the negro and white.

Q—I understand that the compass points to the magnetic pole which changes in location. Why would this change amount to at Bangor, Maine, between 1880 and 1920 as used in surveying?—A. B.

A—The magnetic and Geodetic Survey says that the compass now points about 2 degrees and 15 minutes more to the east at Bangor, Maine, than it did in 1880.

Q—Please tell me when the first Thanksgiving Proclamation was issued?—B.

A—After the first harvest of the New England Colonies, a day of thanksgiving and prayer. In 1817, New York City adopted a similar day, and in 1863, Abraham Lincoln, then president, appointed a day of thanksgiving, and it has since been observed.

Q—Will the government pay funeral expenses of a man who had been in the army?—C. T. M.

A—The War Department says that the government does not pay the funeral expenses of a soldier unless he dies in the service of his country.

Q—The body of Edith Cavell returned to England yesterday. What are the services at Westminster Abbey, the body of Nurse Edith Cavell, who was executed by the Germans at Brussels, October 12, 1915, was buried at Northwick, England, May 15, 1919.

Any reader can get the name of any country by writing to the News-Scimitar Information Bureau, Frederic J. Haskin, director, Washington, D. C.

The Bureau cannot give advice on legal, medical or financial matters. It can, however, give information on the latest news and events.

Write your questions and enclose two cents in stamps for return postage. All replies are sent direct to the inquirer.

RELIEF OF RAILROAD CONGESTION PLANNED

CHICAGO, Sept. 4.—Plans for relief of congestion in the nation's railroads were made yesterday at a meeting attended by nearly a hundred railroad executives representing 90 per cent of the roads of the country.

While most of the reports received and decisions made were not of the 1900-1910 type, a plan was announced that part of the \$300,000,000 borrowed by the roads from the government would be used in immediate construction of new freight cars, 1,253 locomotives, and 1,200 passenger cars. All will be delivered in midwinter, it was said.

The meeting was the first of a series of similar ones held by the roads, which problems pertaining to the nation's railroads will be discussed. The next session will be held here in November.

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## INDOOR SPORTS

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